



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

DEC 30 2002

OFFICE OF POLICY,
ECONOMICS, AND INNOVATION

Ms. Dorothy Bowers
Chair, National Advisory Council for
Environmental Policy and Technology (NACEPT)
111 Aberdeen Road
Matawan, New Jersey 07747

Dear Ms. Bowers:

Thank you for the recent NACEPT report, *The Environmental Future: Emerging Challenges and Opportunities for The EPA*. Administrator Whitman has asked me to respond on behalf of her and the rest of the Environmental Protection Agency.

This report is comprehensive and addresses a wide range of issues with considerable insight. Some of the issues are ones with which we work on a daily basis. Others challenge us to think more broadly about how we approach environmental problems. I hope that my colleagues and I adequately communicated our gratitude to you and the other members of the Council when we met on December 10, 2002. We appreciated the opportunity to discuss the report directly with you.

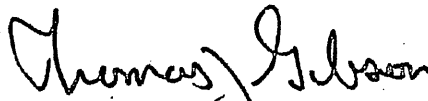
The report is already helping us to reinvigorate our work on environmental futures. We are beginning an examination of how best to encourage program and regional offices to initiate environmental futures work that they can incorporate into their planning. Following on another of your suggestions, we plan to revive our EPA Futures Network to assist individual offices in developing their foresight capacity. Additionally, the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) is currently studying ways to effectively incorporate futures analysis into the Agency's strategic planning. The Office of Research and Development (ORD) and the Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation (OPEI) will contribute additional support. ORD will share the results of its research as well as the outputs from the scanning process that it is developing. OPEI hopes to use the results of futures analyses to help guide the EPA innovation agenda. Through these efforts we hope to engage EPA staff at all levels in addressing future environmental issues.

As we undertake this task, your report will be a key reference for all involved. We have already shared the advance version of your report with selected members of the EPA staff.

We would like to continue to consult with NACEPT in the course of this work. In addition to discussing our activities and findings, we would appreciate additional advice on emerging changes in society and the environment which you believe merit our attention.

Thank you again for this report and your continuing advice.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Thomas J. Gibson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Thomas" and last name "Gibson" clearly distinguishable.

Thomas J. Gibson
Associate Administrator

cc: Linda Combs
Paul Gilman
Daiva Balkus